

Energy Efficiency for Housing Managers: Glossary

Glossary

The table below introduces some additional terms and definitions that are commonly used when discussing energy management and housing. You may want to refer to it as you go through the modules.

Additional Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
alternative energy	A non-conventional source of energy such as wind or solar energy.
archetype	A typical example of a certain type of thing. Housing archetypes include single-family dwelling, townhouse, triplex, multi-unit residential.
BC Building Code (BCBC)	A provincial regulation for the construction of new buildings and alterations that establishes a minimum standard for safety, health, fire, accessibility and structural protection of the buildings.
building envelope	The barrier between the outside and inside of a building. Includes the roof, wall, windows and doors.
demand side management (DSM)	The concept of working to reduce energy consumption through a combination of changing the way occupants use the building (e.g. turning off lights when not in the room) and increasing energy efficiency in residential, commercial and industrial sectors with policy tools (e.g. incentives).
EnerGuide Rating System (ERS)	The official Government of Canada mark associated with the labeling and rating of the energy consumption or energy efficiency of specific products.
energy conservation	Using less of a service and therefore saving energy. E.g. driving less or turning off a light is an example of energy conservation.
energy efficiency	Using less energy to provide the same service. E.g. two refrigerators provide the same service but one uses less energy than the other, making it more energy efficient.
energy management	The practice of monitoring, controlling and optimizing the use of energy in a building, organization or community. Energy management incorporates the concepts of energy conservation and energy efficiency.
Energy utility	A company or organization that provides energy (electricity, natural gas, oil) to customers. E.g., BC Hydro, Fortis BC
GJ	Gigajoule. The amount of energy in one US barrel of oil when combusted. Used to measure natural gas or propane use.
greenhouse gas (GHG)	The gases that contribute to the heating of the earth's atmosphere by absorbing infrared radiation from the sun. Includes CO ₂ , CH ₄ and N ₂ O.
heat pump	A device that transfers heat from one area to another using mechanical energy.
heating system	The equipment or appliances used to heat the home to a comfortable temperature. Includes furnaces (gas or oil fired), electric baseboard heaters, heat pumps, hydronic heating or radiant heating.
Home energy audit	An exercise of assessing the efficiency of a house by a person with the aim to suggest the best ways to improve energy efficiency in heating and cooling the house. This is also known as a home energy evaluation, or a home energy assessment.
kWh	Kilowatt-hour. A unit of energy. Used to measure electricity use.
payback	The time it takes to save as much money (from reduced energy costs) to pay the amount you spend up front to purchase and install the equipment.
per capita	Per person.
plug load	The energy used by products (smartphones, TVs, gaming consoles, etc.) that are powered via an AC plug (the regular type of plugs found in your home).